



# North American Trade and Traffic Data: Trends, Sources & New Initiatives



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# Overview

- Trends in North American Trade
- North American Trade and Transportation Information: Sources and Gaps
- North American Initiatives

# North American Trade and Transportation Trends

- Growing importance of trade to Canadian, Mexican and U.S. economies
- Importance of North American Trade to Each Country
- Key Commodities
- Trade impacts North American transportation networks and facilities

# North American Trade & Transportation: Modal Trends

- Trucking Dominates NAFTA Trade
  - Key ports on each border
    - U.S.-Canada:
      - Detroit, MI/Windsor, ONT
      - Buffalo-Niagara Falls, NY/Fort Erie, ONT
      - Port Huron, MI/Sarnia, ONT
    - U.S.-Mexico:
      - Laredo, TX/Nuevo Laredo, Tamps.
      - El Paso, TX/Ciudad Juarez, Chih.
      - Otay Mesa, CA/Tijuana, BC

# North American Trade & Transportation: Modal Trends

- Rail is Significant, especially in U.S.-Canada Trade and in Key Corridors
- Notable Growth in Trade by Air
- Importance of Waterborne Trade for Bulk Commodities

# North American Trade & Transportation Information Sources

- Administrative Merchandise Trade Data
- Carrier and Shipper Based sources
- Border Crossing Data
- Special Studies

# North American Trade & Transportation: Transborder Surface Freight Data

- Data Elements:
  - Method of Transportation
  - Weight (Imports only)
  - Value
  - Commodity Classification (2-digit HS)
  - U.S. State of Origin and Destination
  - U.S. State of Exporter
  - Port of Entry or Exit

# North American Trade & Transportation: Transborder Surface Freight Data

- Data Elements continued:
  - Canadian Province of Clearance
  - Canadian Province of Origin
  - Mexican State of Destination
  - National Transportation Analysis Region (NTAR) of Exporter
  - Freight Charges
  - Container Code ( Truck and Rail Imports)



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# North American Trade & Transportation: Transborder Surface Freight Data

- Dissemination
  - [www.bts.gov](http://www.bts.gov)
  - Monthly and Annual Detail Data
  - Online Searchable Databases
  - Summary Reports
    - New Feature: Data displayed in tabular or figure/chart formats

# North American Trade & Transportation: Data Issues

- Administrative Trade data
  - Weight data--various issues
  - Method of Transportation only at port of entry/exit (no multimodal data)
  - Method of Transportation definitions and time series gaps
  - Under-representation of air shipments

# North American Trade & Transportation: Data Issues

- Administrative Trade data
  - Lack of intransit data for all modes of transportation
  - Concerns about port definitions (Customs ports vs. physical infrastructure)
  - Concern about origins and destinations
    - Accuracy (physical flows vs. “administrative” flows)
    - Lack of metropolitan area level o/d data

# North American Transportation Statistics Project: Lessons Learned

- Continued Reliance on Trade Statistics means that transportation data problems/inconsistencies generally a subset of larger reconciliation issues in international trade data
- Importance of Dialogue and Coordination with the with the North American Customs and Trade Statistics agencies to ensure transportation community's data needs are being met
- Are notable data gaps that impede ability to assess North American trade and transport trends

# North American Trade and Transportation Initiatives

- North American Working Group on Maritime and Trade Statistics
- Cooperative Meetings with Customs and Trade Statistics Agencies to Address Transportation Data Requirements for North America
- Greater Exchange of Trade Statistics for Reconciliation and Benchmarking of Transportation Data Elements, especially sub-national data

# International Trade Traffic Study

- Requires BTS to conduct a study by June 2001 which will:
  - Measure ton-miles and value miles of international trade traffic carried by highways for each U.S. state
  - Evaluate accuracy and reliability of such measures for use in the formula for highway apportionments